






## The Link

**There is a critical link between nutrition and learning.**



-  Teachers and principals have said it for years: hungry children can't learn. Children who aren't hungry feel better, learn better, and behave better.
-  Nutrition is essential for effective learning every day, all year long. USDA's Child Nutrition Programs—school lunch, school breakfast, after-school snacks, and the summer food program—help children get the nutrition they need to learn, play, grow, and develop.
-  All children need a nutritious breakfast. The School Breakfast Program offers all children—regardless of their economic status—a critical jump start at the beginning of each day.



After-school and summer programs feature healthy meals and snacks, and draw children into supervised activities that are safe, fun, and filled with learning opportunities.



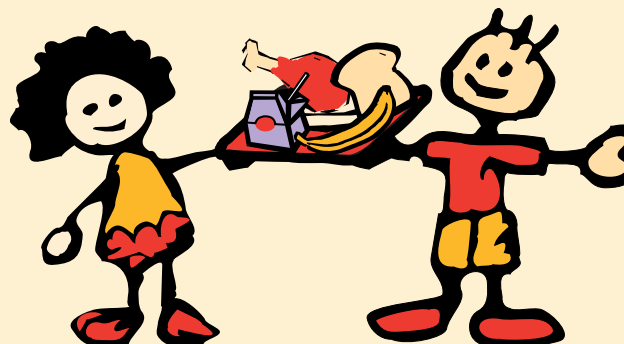
Knowing what their bodies need for good nutrition and having access to nutritious school meals empower children to make healthy food choices now and for the rest of their lives. The dining room is a learning laboratory for practicing nutrition education learned in the classroom.



School nutrition services staff and teachers can maximize the mealtime as an opportunity to teach reading, history, geography, math, and science—by teaming together to promote enjoyment of foods from different cultures, study the history and science of food, practice nutrient calculations, and much more.



A child-friendly dining room, with adequate time for students to eat, relax, and socialize, enhances the school climate and progress toward educational goals.



## The Research

**Nutrition plays a key role in students' school performance.**

- A+** Medical authorities and nutrition researchers have documented that meeting nutritional requirements throughout childhood is essential to full intellectual development.
- A+** Recent research provides compelling evidence that undernutrition impacts the behavior of children, their school performance, and their overall cognitive development (Tufts University Statement, 1998).
- A+** In the “School Breakfast Program and School Performance” study, program participation was associated with improved test performance and reduced tardiness and absence rates (Meyers et al., 1989).
- A+** Researchers at Harvard (1998) reported that when school breakfasts were made available to low-income students their attendance, grades, behavior, and emotional adjustment improved.
- A+** A State of Minnesota Breakfast Study (1997) found that students who ate breakfast had a general increase in math grades and reading scores, increased student attention, reduced nurse visits, and improved student behaviors.



## The Programs

**The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Child Nutrition Programs provide nutrition that promotes learning.**



The National School Lunch Program provides nutritious lunches and the opportunity to practice skills learned in classroom nutrition education.

NEW! Nutritious snacks are now available through the National School Lunch Program to students enrolled in after-school programs.



The School Breakfast Program ensures that all children have access to a healthy breakfast at school to promote learning readiness and healthy eating behaviors.



The Summer Food Service Program provides nutritious meals to low-income children during school vacation.



In addition, Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS) Team Nutrition provides schools with nutrition education materials for children and families, and technical assistance materials for school nutrition service directors, managers and staff. State agency partners provide training and technical assistance to support these programs in local schools.

*For more information, contact the FNS Regional Office that serves your State. See list on the back of this brochure.*



## The Partners

**FNS and your State agency are ready to be your partners in offering nutritious, tasty, and appealing school meals. Together we can help all children make the grade!**

FNS Northeast, Boston MA, 617-565-6426  
CT, ME, MA, NH, NY, RI, VT

FNS Southeast, Atlanta GA, 404-562-7050  
AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN

FNS Southwest, Dallas TX, 214-290-9814  
AR, LA, NM, OK, TX

FNS Western, San Francisco CA, 415-705-2229  
AK, AZ, CA, HI, ID, NV, OR, WA

FNS Mid-Atlantic, Robbinsville NJ, 609-259-5050  
DC, DE, MD, NJ, PA, PR, VA, VI, WV

FNS Midwest, Chicago IL, 312-353-6673  
IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI

FNS Mountain Plains, Denver CO, 303-844-0354  
CO, IA, KS, MO, MT, NE, ND, SD, UT, WY

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# Healthy Eating Helps You Make the Grade!

